

A.A. "Bud" Smyser

Dec. 18, 1920 - Mar. 19, 2001

A.A. "Bud" Smyser died at the Queen's Medical Center on March 19, 2001. Bud was a newspaper man for all his professional life. He worked at the Honolulu Star-Bulletin since 1946 as a reporter, City Editor, Managing Editor, Editor in Chief, and Editorial Page Editor. Bud officially retired in 1983, but continued to write his "Hawaii's World" column twice weekly. Abstracts of his life story have appeared in both Honolulu's daily newspapers. Editorial cartoonists Corky Trinidad of the Star-Bulletin and Dick Adair of the Advertiser have captured the feeling of his newspaper colleagues. And he touched a lot of people in Hawaii, with his early support of Hawaii Statehood; promotion of the Kaiser Permanente Health System; the Star-Bulletin stand on women's rights; formation of the East-West Center; fostering the Hospice movement in Hawaii; relief for cancer patients and others with pain; advice to the terminally ill patients and their physicians; and finally in his stand on Doctor-Assisted Death with Dignity.

It would be a fitting tribute to the way Bud Smyser led his life, and to his passing, if Hawaii's lawmakers take a serious look at the work of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Living and Dying with Dignity, on which Smyser served.¹

Bud died, as he lived, with dignity. A massive brain hemorrhage, caused by a fall at home in his garden, meant that there was no chance of saving his life. After emergency treatment at Queen's Medical

Center, his family followed Bud's wishes in asking for no life-support measures. Bud passed away peacefully at 4 AM on Monday, March 19, 2001, without the need of physician assistance.

Bud served on our Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Living and Dying with Dignity, and he wrote very insightful pertinent columns in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Through the years, the Journal has reprinted his articles dealing with Hospice in Hawaii; reduction of pain in cancer patients; and the controversy over what I termed "DADD", Doctor Assisted Death with Dignity.

In this issue of the Journal, we reprint his last three columns as a special tribute to him. His last was written just one week before his fall, entitled "A Better Way to Die."

I had planned to propose that our medical school grant Bud Smyser an honorary medical degree for his thoughtful prose in support of hospice, pain relief, and doctor-assisted death with dignity. But Bud, as modest as he was, perhaps would have vetoed my proposal.

Well, Bud, you can't edit me now, so here it is:

A.A. "BUD" SMYSER, HONORARY DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

Mahalo to his wife, Dee, and their family for sharing Bud with all of Hawaii.

Norman Goldstein, MD, Editor

¹ Editorial on A.A. "Bud" Smyser: Commentator, Conscience; Honolulu Advertiser, page A-16, Tuesday, March 20, 2001.

John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

confers upon

A.A. "Bud" Smyser

the degree of

Honorary Doctor of Medicine

in recognition of his lifetime support of hospice,
pain relief, and death with dignity

April 6, 2001
Date



Ed Colman
Dean